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The doomsday beat

Aviation Week, a defense community trade magazine, helps to set the national agenda. The daily press lends it a hand.

You are sitting in the office of a hero and a patriot. On the wall behind his desk is a large charcoal portrait of Lieutenant General Claire Chennault, commander of the 14th Air Force, the renowned Flying Tigers unit which fought the Japanese in China during World War II. The general's chin is squared like a concrete bunker and beneath it his signature dedicates this memento to Major Robert Hotz. Next to the portrait is a framed scroll awarding Hotz the Air Medal with oak leaf cluster for his outstanding service. Next to that is a distinctive flag of red-and-white American stripes emblazoned in the corner not with stars but with the white Chinese sun on a blue blackground. That sun is still the official symbol of Nationalist China. Members of the Flying Tigers wore the flag for identification across the backs of their flying jackets. This one was Robert Hotz's own. He flew a B-25.

A perfect photo of a fellow pilot's B-25, taken by Hotz during a combat mission, is displayed on the wall next to his desk. Bombs are falling from the weapons bay. Along the wall are photos of other aircraft, of combat targets taken by gun cameras, of missile tests, of generals and admirals and pilots and aircraft designers Hotz has known all over the world, together with dedications, souvenirs of air shows at Farnborough, Paris, and Tushino, and other records of historic moments in aviation, all of them marking milestones in the life of this man or recognizing the distinguished contributions he has made for the past three decades, first as editor and more recently as publisher of *Aviation Week and Space Technology*.

"Antonov sent me that," he says, pointing to a photo of an Antonov transport aircraft lifting off from a Soviet airfield. "He wrote on it: *Bob, you were there, you know how short this runway was.*" Another photo shows two young men with short, dark hair, one of them in an Air Force uniform. Hotz, who has a ruddy complexion and a shock of fine, white hair, points to it and says, "That's me, with Tom Powers, at a reception given by Marshal Zhukov at the Red Army Club in Moscow." The photo is dated June 24, 1956. Powers later became chief of our Strategic Air Command.

Tom Gervasi, a military analyst and former counterintelligence officer, is the author of *Arsenal of Democracy: American Weapons for Foreign*

by TOM GERVASI

The offices of *Aviation Week* run along a back corridor on the fourth floor of the National Press Building in Washington. Walking along that corridor, you would not suppose that just beyond an unassuming glass-pannelled door lies what Drew Middleton of *The New York Times* calls "a very wide-awake organization," one which occupies a unique position in this country's journalism.

Packed with full-page color advertisements showing off new aircraft, missiles, and electronic systems, and with regular columns and features on job changes, forthcoming professional meetings, and air-traffic records, McGraw Hill's *Aviation Week* arrives every Monday morning on the desks of most of its 102,000 subscribers in 132 countries. For its frequent advance disclosures of technology that may change the balance of power, the magazine is read at the highest levels of government throughout the world. As a trade journal, it is indispensable to the aerospace and defense industries it serves, keeping them abreast of technical developments, funding, and trends in policy, and not infrequently acting as the industry's spokesman to influence policy changes. As a primary source of military information for the general press, it is more influential than some reporters will readily admit.

Most important of all, because it identifies solidly with the defense community and has built a reputation as a guardian of the national interest, as this community defines it, *Aviation Week* has privileged access to defense information and plays a pivotal role in the capital's public-information wars. This means that it can publish sensitive information with a degree of impunity that can only remind such men as Daniel Ellsberg, Daniel Schorr, and Howard Morland that the government has always employed more than a single standard in defining national security interests for the press.

Call it treason?

"Early in 1956," Hotz recalls, "when the Soviets were first developing ballistic missiles, Trevor Gardner got General Electric to build this fantastic radar to monitor their tests." Gardner, then assistant secretary of defense, had the AN/FPS-17 radar constructed and then installed near Samsun, Turkey. With an initial range of about 1,000